

The Lexington Intelligencer

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The Intelligencer family wishes one and all a happy and prosperous New Year.

A Little Lay Sermon.

From the Kansas City Journal.

America made a magnificent ending of the year that is drawing to a close and it faces the coming year with a smile, happy in the consciousness that it has done its duty as a nation and may hold up its head with the proudest. Its voice has been for peace on earth and good will toward men. Not a single act has pressed down the scale wherein are weighed the deeds of nations so that the sword sank and the plowshare, the emblem of peace and plenty, rose in the balance, overborne by the weight of warlike steel.

Ever during the year did the balance swing toward the side of justice and friendship among the nations, so far as America was concerned. The national conscience is as clear, as the nation's acts are passed in review and the answer is marked on the recording scales. The old year can leave no heritage more precious. The new year can receive no charge more sacred.

It is not without deep significance that New Year's day follows so closely the celebration of the birth of Christ. Upon all Christian nations, and upon all Christians as individuals, it lays the double obligation of making the new year the redemption of all the pledges of better things that are bound up in the world's noblest holiday. There is a tremendous spiritual meaning in the coincidence that Christendom is the only division of the human race that celebrates the birth of a child as a religious festival.

Yet Christendom is far from being the only division of the human race that acts in accordance with either the human innocence or the divine wisdom of the Christ-child. The year, therefore, that ends with the inculcation of these mighty lessons of immaculate goodness and more than human wisdom fittingly points seven days ahead to the beginning of a new year as the opportunity to correct the mistakes of the past and to begin anew in the spirit of the holy day ushered in by the songs of angels, according to the tenets of the Christian faith.

It is manifest that something more than human wisdom and human goodness, as exemplified in the laws which men make, must bring nations and individuals to a realizing sense of how a new year should begin and how it should progress, if it is to end in honor. The laws which regulate the conduct of the individual are only obstacles placed in the path of the weak or wicked for the protection of the well disposed. They are the barriers which the good citizen raises against the thief, the marauder, the murderer. They may be surmounted, and they are surmounted or overthrown, by those who are strong enough to do it. They will continue to be scaled or battered down so long as individuals do not will to do right. Laws merely limit and restrict the ability to do wrong.

The only efficacious preventive of wickedness is the determination to do right, the refusal to do wrong. It is a very indifferently good citizen who does not violate the law because he has not the opportunity or because he is afraid of the consequences. Conversely, that is the highest type of good citizenship which rejects the opportunity to evade the law and which does the right thing because it is right.

New Year's day is a good time to take stock of one's motives, his intentions, the success of his evasions of his duties, his failure to carry out his good resolutions, the success of his efforts to resist temptation, the failure of his weakness to take from his moral and spiritual strength. It is the time of inventory and planning, of looking behind, around and ahead; of rising up from the old year's stumbles and putting his feet on more solid ground for the year that is to come.

The calendar is all-merciful. It contains 365 days in every year and a number of years equal to the life of the individual. There is not an hour in one of those days, not a day in one of those years, when there is not an opportunity to about face and get into the right relation toward one's self, his neighbors and his God. The very multiplicity of these chances may militate with some to postpone the date of the new start. But there can be no denying the opportuneness of New Year's as the point of the new beginning. Let the other chances take care of themselves when need arises. Now is the time to balance the sheet of life's account thus far, reposing a reverent confidence in the mercy that will fill up the credit side with opportunity to measure up at least the approximately to the other side of the ledger, crowded with the things for which every man is a debtor to providence.

Opportunity, however, should

be regarded as a loan of honor that cannot be repudiated with out shame. That is a dishonest man who lives off the money loaned by his friend, without making any effort to repay him, and he is still more dishonest who imposes upon the kindness of an overruling providence and draws against the store placed at his disposal, without putting forth every possible effort in his power to replace it by doing the full measure of his duty.

It would go hard with men if Opportunity knocked only once and left the slothful to his fate. Senator Ingall's philosophy was to a certain degree more cynical than accurate. There is indeed a divinity in the affairs of men which demands instant acceptance of some opportunities, which makes one misstep irrevocable, which decides the crisis of life for good or ill, which sets men's feet in paths that lead far apart and makes wisdom of choice a matter of crucial importance. But a saving mercy in the scheme of things makes the irreparable errors few and places in the hands of men a thread that will guide them through the labyrinth back to light and happiness if they will but follow its kindly leading. The old Greeks knew human nature when they invented their mighty myth of Aridue and the Cnosian maze.

For the great and whole duty of man is to slay the Minotaur that devours human lives when once they become enmeshed in the dark windings of sin. The race is wandering in the blackness of an evil state. It is paying its tribute of hope and happiness, of virtue and goodness, of all the splendid things of life—not every year or multiple of years, but every day, every hour. All men are under the doom, but they need remain under it no longer than they will to stay. The thread of their liberation is in their own hands.

God's decree does not sentence them to a day or an hour of danger longer than they choose to accept the risk, the pain and wretchedness of their state. They have but to sign their own release and leave their prison-maze, for in the hands of each is placed the thread that will extricate him from the untwisted tangle of his own devious ways. That thread is the will to escape the loathing and not the love of darkness, the love of and not indifference to light. This it is that will make the blackness an abomination and sunshine the most desirable thing in the universe. Surely he is a prisoner not worthy of liberty who will not put his own sign manual upon the edict of his emancipation.

When a cell can please and freedom be unwelcome, the captive is wickedly unwise and not merely the victim of a bondage which he cannot throw off. Every day is the day of the new year for him who honestly and earnestly seeks to lead the new life. New Year's day is only an arbitrary figure on the calendar, a sign that reads: "Begin Here." May New Year's day, 1915, carry to every soul that needs it the meaning which makes every chance big with the joy of its embracing, every turning away from evil bright with the new light to which it leads. Begin here and now. The thread is dangling before all men's eyes and they need only stretch out their hand, grasp it and follow it to the Thesean victory of self-conquest.

In these times of depression, when complaint is heard everywhere of lack of employment for workingmen and consequent destitution and suffering, the State Legislature might well afford to take up the project of public road building through the State, using the money now annually wasted through the appointment of all sorts of "commissions" whose sole purpose seems to be to give easy money to favored members

of House and Senate, and with no return to the people for money thus spent. The State Labor Bureau reports approximately 75,000 men out of employment in this State, and for the Legislature to provide them employment would be in the interest of humanity and at the same time result in great benefit to the State by providing permanent State highways which would serve as a model and stimulate the building up counties of connecting roads. We hope the Governor will recommend some plan by which relief may be afforded the unemployed and a stop put to the waste of public funds by the appointment of "junketing" and other useless committees and commissions.—The Glasgow Missourian.

A Useless Commission.

One way for congress to save some money would be to abolish the so-called commission on industrial relations. This is an expensive commission whose duty seems to be to pry into every one's business under one pretext or another, and reminds one of the nosey, gossiping old woman of the neighborhood who views everything with suspicion and believes evil of all.

Frank P. Walsh, of Kansas City, is chairman of this expensive graft and he is striving to keep in the limelight with all the enthusiasm of a vaudeville manager on the outlook for the latest thrill. Mr. Walsh now intends to investigate the Rockefeller foundation, the Baron Hirsch fund, the Carnegie charity organizations, the Sage foundation and other charitable concerns which are given away the vast fortunes accumulated by their owners in a way that will do the most good. But a pure soul like Mr. Walsh can't understand why money should be given away unless there is some base motive behind it.

Mr. Walsh also might be investigated a little and his industrial relations looked into a few years ago he was a poor young lawyer. Today he is a wealthy man. He is of the damage suit class and made his fortune splitting judgments, with unfortunate who were injured, as he always given his clients as much of the money recovered as people think he should? Why should he be paid ten times as much in a damage suit as the corporation pays its lawyer who defends the case? Isn't his own soul a little tainted?

Publishers of yellow journals say that there are three things which always catch the American eye—money, love and mystery. Around these are constantly built interesting fakes. By connecting itself with vast sums of money like the various great charitable institutions, the industrial commission composed of men known only locally manage to get before the people, a thing their souls crave. The chance to investigate therefore, cannot be overlooked. The commission itself should really be abolished without the formality of an investigation. It is useless and no doubt expensive fake.—The Springfield Leader.

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Application form 1341, and full information concerning the requirements of the examination, can be secured from the secretary of the local examining board or the postmaster at any of the examination points named above or from the United States Civil Service Commission, Washington, D. C.

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